

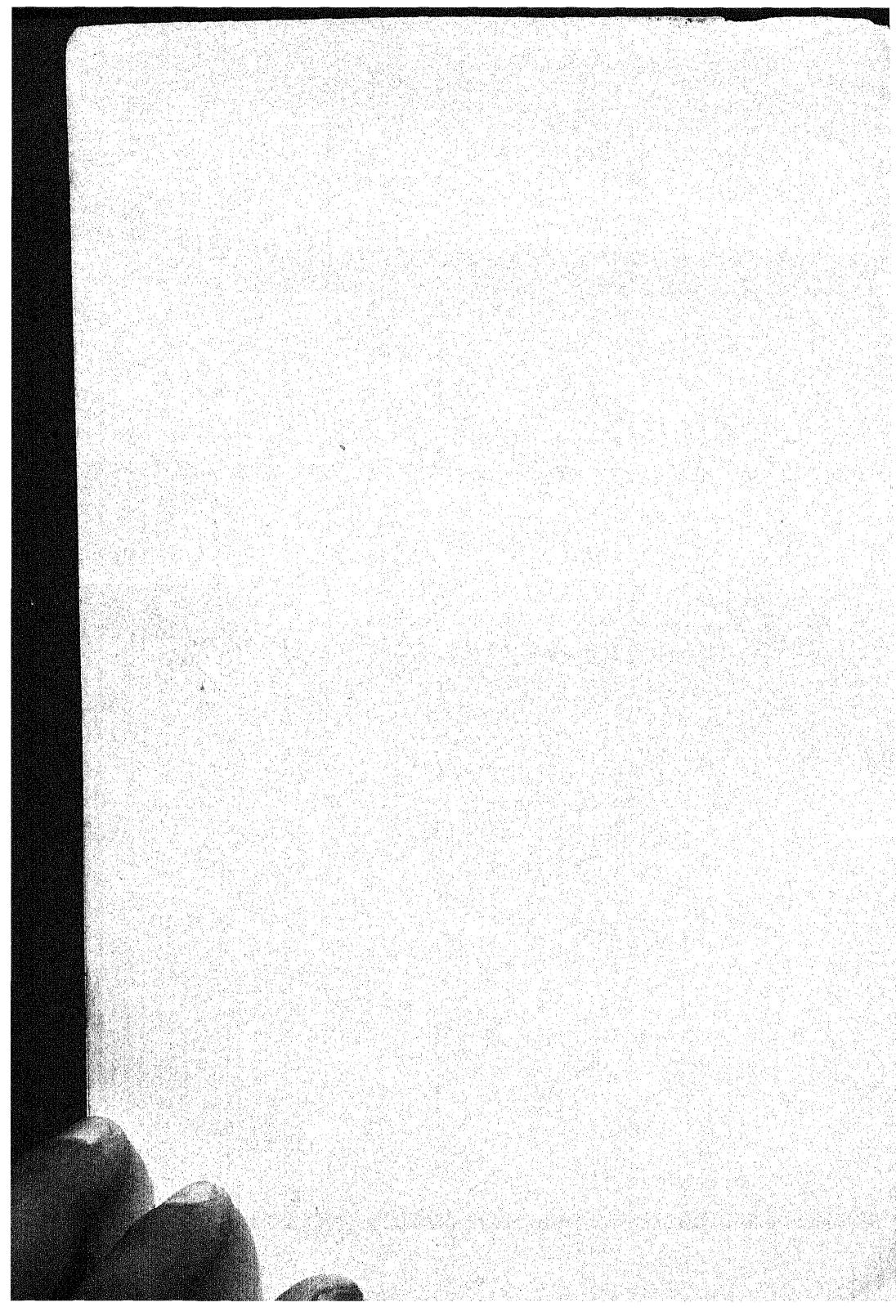
DEFENCE PROBLEMS  
OF  
INDIA

## FOREWORD.

The future of a great country can only be built greatly by patient thought and action. Now that after a fair and just rule of over a century and a half, developing India from a heterogeneous mass of warring elements into a homogeneous whole with a common patriotism, Great Britain has determined on a policy of increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and of development of self-governing institutions with a view to progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire, the leaders of Indian life owe it to their people to turn away from their present negative activities and to prepare themselves seriously for the responsibilities which are going to be theirs.

The object of this series is to place before the public certain vital constitutional issues, on the proper solution of which must rest the future well-being of the people of the country.

23.1.46  
4457



## CONTENTS.

### INTRODUCTION.

#### CHAPTER I.

	PAGE.
<i>Economic Aspect of India's Defence</i>	1

#### CHAPTER II.

<i>Military Aspect of India's Defence</i>	5
---	---

Purposes of the Standing Army—

(i) External Defence .. .. .. ..	5
(ii) Internal Security .. .. .. ..	6
(iii) Treaty obligations to States .. .. .. ..	6
(iv) Imperial Purposes .. .. .. ..	6

#### CHAPTER III.

<i>Financial and Political Problems</i> ..	8
--	---

Ways and Means suggested for retrenchment of the Army Budget— 8

(i) Reduction of British troops in India by increase in Indian troops .. .. .. ..	8
(ii) Contribution by Home Government towards the maintenance of troops in India for Imperial purposes .. .. .. ..	8
(iii) Abolition of the "Capitation Charges" .. .. .. ..	8
(iv) Indianisation of the Higher Command in the Indian Army .. .. .. ..	8

(i) *Reduction of British troops:* Arguments advanced by the Simon Commission for maintaining a British element in India's Defence for— .. .. .. ..

(a) Internal Security .. .. .. ..	9
(b) Frontier Defence .. .. .. ..	9
(c) Discharge of Imperial obligations to States .. .. .. ..	12

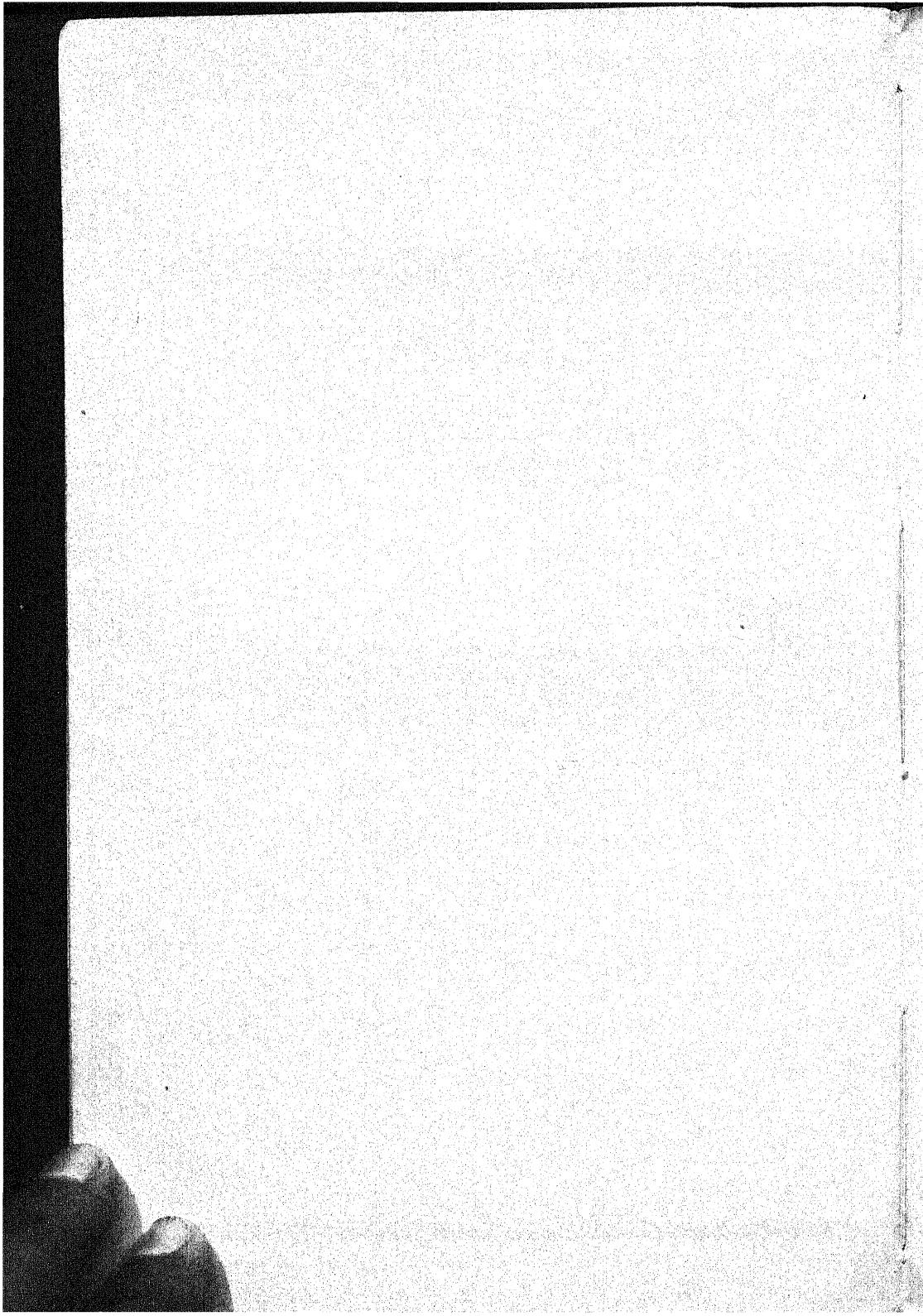
Criticisms of the arguments of the Simon Commission by—

(p) the Hon'ble Sir Sankaran Nair, the Hon'ble Raja Nawab Ali Khan and the Hon'ble Sardar Bahadur Shivdeo Singh Uberoi, Members of the Indian Central Committee ..	12
(g) Ditto .. .. .. ..	14

	PAGE.
(r) Sir Hari Singh Gour, Member of the Indian Central Committee	14
(s) The Indian Central Committee— <i>Provincial Armies</i>	14
<i>Creation of Dominion Army</i> as suggested by the Simon Commission. Criticisms thereof by Government of India .. ..	19
(ii) <i>Contribution by Home Government</i> : Discussions: views of the Simon Commission and criticisms thereof. Mechanisation of Army and its Imperial aspect .. ..	21
(iii) <i>Capitation charges</i> : Memorandum of the Hon'ble Sir Sankaran Nair and two other members of the Indian Central Committee. Negotiations between Government of India and British Government .. .. .. ..	25
(iv) <i>Indianisation of the Higher Command</i> — (a) Historical .. .. .. ..	26
(b) Skeen Committee .. .. .. ..	28
(c) Nehru Committee .. .. .. ..	30
(d) Indian Central Committee .. .. .. ..	30
(e) Simon Commission .. .. .. ..	30
(f) Round Table Conference (First Session) .. .. .. ..	32
(g) Round Table Conference (Second Session) .. .. .. ..	33
(h) Indian Military College Committee .. .. .. ..	33
How far Indianisation is likely to be economical .. .. .. ..	34
 <b>CHAPTER IV.</b>	
<i>Constitutional Problems</i> . .. .. .. ..	35
The constitutional position of the Army under— (a) Government of India Act .. .. .. ..	35
The same as dealt with by— (b) Nehru Committee. .. .. .. ..	36
(c) Simon Commission. .. .. .. ..	38
(d) Despatch of Government of India .. .. .. ..	41
(e) Round Table Conference (Second Session) .. .. .. ..	46
 <b>CONCLUSION</b> .. .. .. ..	49

#### REFERENCE.

I.S.C.R., I . . . . Indian Statutory Commission Report, Vol. I.  
I.S.C.R., II . . . . Ditto ditto Vol. II.  
I.S.C. . . . . Indian States Committee Report.  
I.C.C. . . . . Indian Central Committee Report.  
R.T.C. . . . . Round Table Conference Proceedings.  
Despatch . . . . Government of India's Despatch on Proposals for  
Constitutional Reforms.  
A.P.C. . . . . All Parties Conference Report.

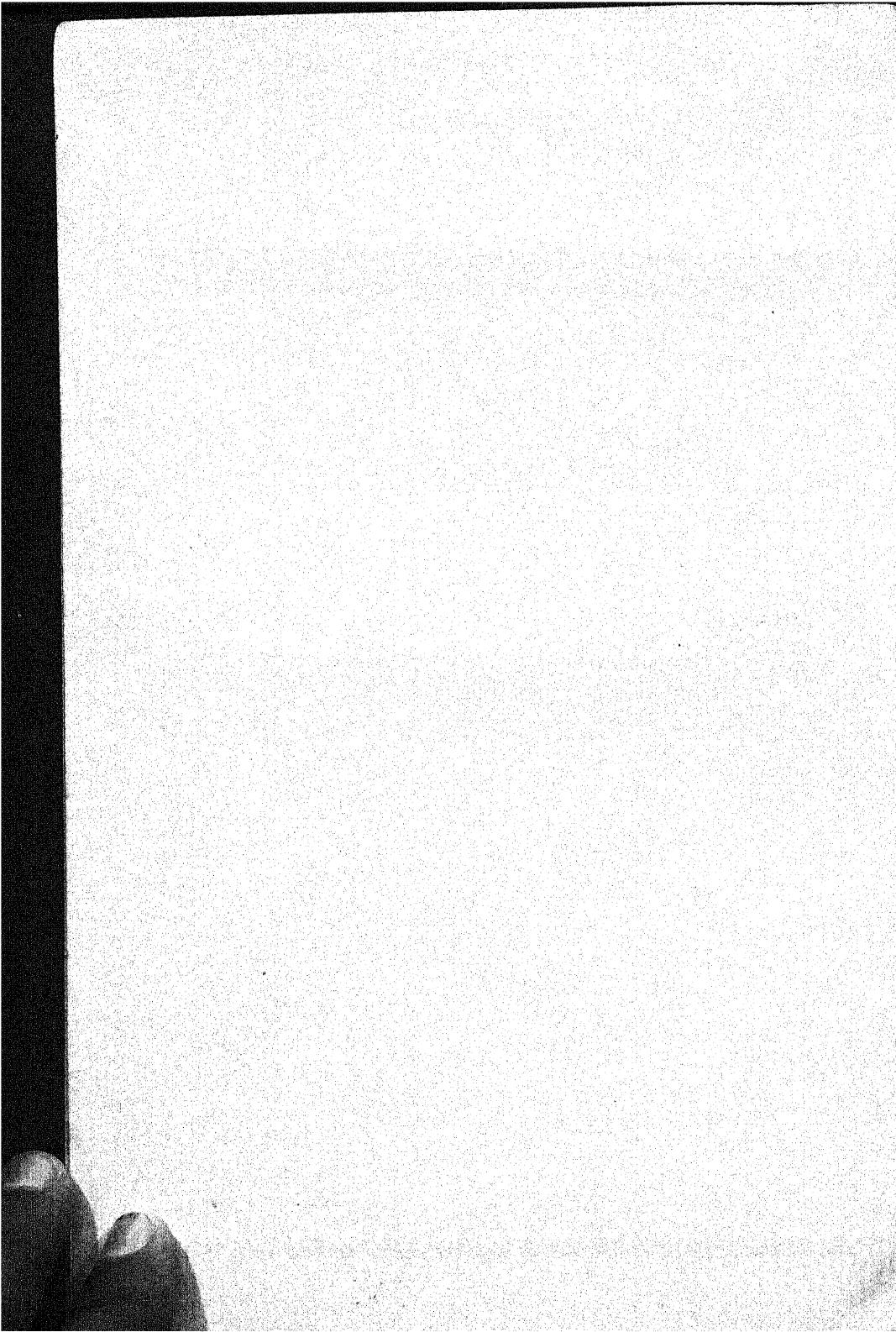


## INTRODUCTION.

"In considering the implications of the policy, to the pursuit of which the British Parliament is solemnly pledged, for the increasing association of Indians in every branch of Indian administration, and for the development of responsible Government in British India, no question is at once more difficult and more crucial than the future organisation, recruitment and control of the Army in India," observed the Simon Commission.

It is our purpose to analyse the problems of India's defence in relation to the declared constitutional policy of His Majesty's Government.

---



## CHAPTER I.

### Economic Aspect of India's Defence.

The most striking aspect of India's Defence is undoubtedly the relative enormity of expenditure that it involves. This aspect has never been more ably set forth than by Mr. W. T. Layton, Financial Assessor to the Simon Commission.

"The following table presents a balance sheet of India's central and provincial finances, from which can be clearly seen the relative importance of the various items of revenue and expenditure.

### BUDGET ESTIMATES OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE OF CENTRAL AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS IN 1929-30.

*[In crores of rupees. One crore of rupees = £750,000.]*

<i>Central Revenue.</i>		<i>Central Expenditure.</i>	
Customs ..	.. 51.22	Defence (net) ..	55.10
Income tax ..	.. 16.60	Debt charges (net) ..	12.19
Salt ..	.. 6.35	Civil Administration (net) ..	11.56
Other taxes ..	.. 1.19	Loss on post office, irrigation and forests ..	.39
Total taxes ..	.. 75.36	Cost of collection ..	3.32
Railways (net) ..	.. 6.25	Civil Works (net) ..	2.41
Opium (net) ..	.. 2.35	Pensions ..	2.78
Currency and Mint (net) ..	.. 2.35	Other expenditure (net) ..	..
Tributes from Indian States ..	.. .74		
Other receipts (net) ..	.. 1.17		
 Total ..	 88.22	 Total ..	 88.22

<i>Provincial Revenue.</i>		<i>Provincial Expenditure.</i>	
Land Revenue ..	.. 35.48	Land Revenue and General Administration ..	15.76
Excise ..	.. 19.44	Police ..	12.28
Stamps ..	.. 14.35	Jails and Justice ..	8.31
Registration ..	.. 1.47	Debt ..	3.24
Scheduled taxes ..	.. .39	Pensions ..	4.05
Total taxes ..	.. 71.13	Education ..	12.57
Forests (net) ..	.. 2.07	Medical and Public Health ..	6.38
Irrigation (net) ..	.. 2.77	Agriculture and Industries ..	3.53
Other sources of revenue ..	.. 12.28	Civil Works ..	11.84
 Total ..	 88.25	 Total ..	 86.96

Thus on the expenditure side, debt absorbs 15 crores, defence 55 crores, law and order, justice, etc., 21 crores, general civil administration (including land revenue) 27 crores, and pensions 7 crores. Education accounts for 13 crores, health and medical services  $6\frac{1}{2}$  crores, agriculture and industry  $3\frac{1}{2}$  crores, while the expenditure on civil works amounts to 14 crores.

An outstanding feature of this summary is the high proportion ( $62\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.) which current expenditure on defence bears to the total expenditure of the Central Government—a higher proportion in fact than in any other country in the world. This ratio is not in itself, however, very instructive, since it depends on the functions performed by central Governments. In the case of a federation, for example, which combined for purposes of defence only, military expenditure would absorb one hundred per cent. of the federation's budget. It is more significant that even when account is taken of provincial and central expenditure together, the ratio ( $31\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.) is still a very high one. This ratio is high in part because other kinds of expenditure are low. India has a comparatively small unproductive debt, while many forms of Government service are very little developed.

On the other hand, it is to be remembered that the extent to which taxation is felt as a burden depends very largely on the objects on which a Government spends its revenue. Thus, it has been frequently pointed out that taxation for the purpose of paying interest on an internal debt is economically speaking a transfer of wealth within a country, which may—it is true—hamper enterprise, if the method of raising the revenue is unwise, but which need not do so or affect the total saving power of the community. Again, wise expenditure on social services and particularly on health and education should be remunerative in the sense of increasing the wealth producing power and, therefore, the taxable capacity of a country. Security is, of course, essential, if production is to develop; but it cannot be claimed for expenditure on defence either that it is a mere redistribution of income or that it promotes productive efficiency. Indeed, economically speaking, it is the most burdensome form of expenditure,

and this is particularly the case where, as in the case of India, the Army contains a large element drawn from elsewhere. If, therefore, the high 'defence' in Indian Government expenditure is partly due to the low level of other expenditure, it remains a peculiarly burdensome one, and it would be reasonable to assume that, even if the total expenditure of India were increased, the burden would be more tolerable and more readily borne, provided this particular charge were diminished.

But apart altogether from the question of other forms of expenditure in India, the defence charge is undoubtedly high. A recent comparison of the military expenditure of the nations of the world shows that in this respect India is seventh on the list among the Great Powers and that her expenditure on armaments is between two and three times as great as that of the whole of the rest of the Empire outside Great Britain. Again, the total is not only high in itself and as compared with other countries, but it has also greatly increased as compared with the pre-War situation. India, in fact, has not obtained any relief from the great sense of world security, which has succeeded the World War. On the contrary, her defence expenditure has risen even after allowing for the rise in prices and has grown more rapidly than in other parts of the Empire. This is apparent from the following figures quoted by Mr. Jacobsson in the summary already mentioned:—

ARMAMENTS EXPENDITURE (IN MILLION £).

	1913.	1928.	Percentage increase.
Great Britain	..	77·2	115
India	..	22·0	44
The Dominions	..	9·0	12
Total	..	108·2	171
			58·33

The figures were given by Mr. Jacobsson in sterling for purposes of comparison. Only a part, however, of India's defence expenditure is paid in sterling. The figures would only show an increase in rupees of 66 per cent. owing to the

change in the par value of the rupee. The rise of wholesale prices in India is only 41 per cent." (I.S.C.R., II, 215-18.)

The matter has been viewed from another standpoint by Mr. Layton. "The annual income of the British people is estimated to be about £4,400 millions, or not far short of £100 per head of the population. The average income of the people of India after the War was Rs. 107. Considering that prices have meanwhile fallen, it can hardly be put at a higher figure to-day. At the current rate of exchange this is equivalent to about £8 per head per annum. The proportion of this annual income which is taken in Britain by the tax gatherer and spent upon military and naval defence is about 2½ per cent., viz., £2 10s. per head. In the case of India, the expenditure upon the army is 2s. 7d. per head or, leaving out of account the Indian States and including British India only, 3s. 4d. per head or about 2 per cent. of the average annual income. But, whereas the amount collected by the Government and spent upon education in Britain inasmuch as £2 15s. per head, the amount spent on education in British India is less than 9d. per head.

These simple figures illustrate three of the chief features of the financial situation in India, viz.,—

The mass of the people are extremely poor.

She is incurring expenditure on the primary functions of Government, such as defence and the maintenance of law and order, as high in proportion to her wealth as Western nations.

Her expenditure on social services such as education, health, sanitation, etc., on the other hand, is far behind Western standards, and indeed in many directions is almost non-existent.

The insufficiency of India's revenue to provide adequately for the latter classes of expenditure has been a factor of political importance in that it has created dissatisfaction with the very small headway that it has been possible to make in the direction of social amelioration under the Reforms." (I.S.C.R., II, 207-8.)

## CHAPTER II.

### Military Aspect of India's Defence.

The question naturally arises as to whether the "dominating" army budget is capable of any reduction consistent with efficiency and India's security. India at present maintains a standing army of 60,000 British troops and 150,000 Indian troops (as well as 34,000 reservists). What are the purposes for which this standing army is maintained?

(i) EXTERNAL DEFENCE.—"India throughout history has had to endure a series of incursions by foreign invaders, who have forced their way through the defiles in the North-West, and at other points where a gap was found in the immense mountain barrier which cuts off India from the rest of Asia. It is noteworthy that, notwithstanding the teeming millions of India's population, comparatively small bodies of invaders have often succeeded in overcoming all opposition and making their way through to the plains, where they have established themselves as conquerors. It is the difficult and necessary role of the Army in India to guard against a repetition of these dangers. Sixty thousand British troops and 150,000 Indian troops (as well as 34,000 reservists) are organised into a Field Army, into covering troops, and into a garrison for internal security, with this task amongst others constantly in mind. In peace time the duty of the covering troops, assisted by frontier levies of various kinds, is to prevent the independent tribes on the Indian side of the Afghan frontier from raiding the peaceful inhabitants of the plains below. From 1850 to 1922 there have been 72 expeditions against these tribes—an average of one a year. Behind and beyond this belt of unorganised territory lies the direction from which, throughout the ages, the danger to India's territorial integrity has come—a quarter, we may observe, occupied by States who are not members of the League of Nations." (I.S.C.R., I, 94.)

(ii) INTERNAL SECURITY.—“The Army in India is also distributed and habitually used throughout India for the purpose of maintaining or restoring internal peace. In all countries the soldier when in barracks may be regarded as available in the last resort to deal with domestic disturbance with which the policeman cannot cope, but in Britain and elsewhere in the Empire this is little more than a theoretical consideration. The military is not normally employed in this way, and certainly is not organised for this purpose. But the case of India is entirely different. Troops are employed many times a year to prevent internal disorder and, if necessary, to quell it. Police forces, admirably organised as they are, cannot be expected in all cases to cope with the sudden and violent outburst of a mob driven frantic by religious frenzy.” (I.S.C.R., I, 94.)

(iii) TREATY OBLIGATIONS TO STATES.—“The paramount Power is responsible for the defence of both British India and the Indian States...against foes, foreign and domestic. It owes this duty to all the Indian States alike. Some of the States contribute in different ways to the cost of this defence by the payment of tribute, by the assignment of lands, by the maintenance of Indian States Forces. But, whether or not a State makes a contribution to the cost of defence, the Paramount Power is under a duty to protect the States.” (I.S.C., 27-8.) The position has been stated more clearly by Sir Leslie Scott: “The British Government as paramount power has undertaken the defence of all the States, and therefore to remain in India with whatever military and naval forces may be requisite to enable it to discharge that function” says Sir Leslie Scott.

(iv) IMPERIAL PURPOSES.—“The North-West Frontier is not only the frontier of India: it is an international frontier of the first importance from the military point of view for the whole Empire. On India’s frontier alone is the Empire open to any serious threat of attack by land, and it must be remembered that such an attack might be delivered not on account of any quarrel with India, but because a dispute between the Empire and a Foreign Power had arisen in quite a different part of the world. The problem of India is,

therefore, unique, since no other part of the Empire possesses such a frontier—vulnerable with such grave consequences and defended at such a cost...Imperial foreign policy Empire communications, Empire trade, the general position of Britain in the East, may be vitally affected.” (I.S.C.R., II, 173-4.)



## CHAPTER III.

### Financial and Political Problems.

How far can retrenchment be effected having in view the purposes for which the Army is maintained in India?

The following ways of retrenchment have been discussed:—

- (i) Reduction of British troops in India by increase in Indian troops.
- (ii) Contribution by the Home Government towards maintenance of troops in India for Imperial purposes (including discharge of treaty obligations towards the Indian States) as distinguished from those maintained for India's own internal and external defence.
- (iii) Abolition of the "Capitation Charges" levied by the Home Government.
- (iv) Indianisation of the Higher Command in the Indian Army.

The Army problems of a country are inextricably mixed up with political considerations of fundamental importance. Any proposals for retrenchment of the army budget must, therefore, take due account of the political considerations that they may involve.

(i) REDUCTION OF BRITISH TROOPS IN INDIA.—A British soldier is estimated to cost between three or four times as much as an Indian soldier. Can the British element be replaced to any extent by Indian element? This raises the question how far the British troops are necessary for the purposes of India's internal and external defence.

*Necessity of the British element.*—The Simon Commission were of opinion that British troops were necessary for three reasons.

(a) *Internal security.*—“We have been told that this use of the Army for the purpose of maintaining or restoring internal order was increasing rather than diminishing, and that on these occasions the practically universal request was for British troops. The proportion of British to Indian troops allotted to this duty has in fact risen in the last quarter of a century. The reason of course is that the British soldier is a neutral, and is under no suspicion of favouring Hindus against Muhammadans, or Muhammadans against Hindus.\* India is a country in which the wildest and most improbable stories of outrage or insult spread with amazing rapidity and are widely believed, and inasmuch as the vast majority of the disturbances which call for the intervention of the military have a communal or religious complexion, it is natural and inevitable that the intervention which is most likely to be authoritative should be that which has no bias, real or suspected, to either side. It is a striking fact in this connection that, while in the regular units of the Army in India as a whole British soldiers are in a minority of about 1 to  $2\frac{1}{2}$ , in the troops allotted for internal security the preponderance is reversed, and for this purpose a majority of British troops is employed—in the troops earmarked for internal security the proportion is about eight British to seven Indian soldiers. When, therefore, one contemplates a future for India in which, in place of the existing Army organisation, the country is defended and pacified by exclusively Indian units, just as Canada relies on Canadian troops and Ireland on Irish troops, it is essential to realise and bear in mind the dimensions and character of the Indian problem or internal order and the part which the British soldier at present plays (to the general satisfaction of the countryside) in supporting peaceful Government.” (I.S.C.R., I, 95-6.)

(b) *Frontier Defence.*—“The land frontier of India exposes her in the North-West to a constant and pressing danger of a magnitude which is quite without parallel in any other

\*For example, in connection with the very serious riots which broke out in Bombay in the spring of 1929, a British battalion was brought up from Poona, and there can be no doubt that its appearance contributed materially to relieving a situation which had become highly charged with communal feeling.

part of the Empire. For her defence against this menace, India relies on an Army which must be adequate in its higher command, staff, and organisation, sufficient in numbers, suitable in composition, and efficient in equipment and training. The evidence we have heard and what we have seen in the course of our Indian tours leave no doubt in our minds that, at least for a very long time to come, it will be impossible for the Army entrusted with the task of defending India to dispense with a very considerable British element, including in that term British troops of all arms, a considerable proportion of the regimental officers of the Indian Army, and the British personnel in the higher command. The rank and file of the Indian Army are not drawn from all over India, but from certain martial races who themselves largely represent former masters of parts of India, so that the problem of providing them with a non-British command is of quite peculiar difficulty." (I.S.C.R., II, 167-8.)

"Broadly speaking, one may say that those races which furnish the best sepoys are emphatically not those which exhibit the greatest accomplishments of mind in an examination. The Indian intellectual has, as a rule, no personal longing for any army career. The contrast between areas and races in India that take to soldiering, and those that do not, has no counterpart in Europe. Whereas the most virile of the so-called martial races provide fine fighting material, other communities and areas in India do not furnish a single man for the regular Army. The Punjab supplies 54 per cent. of the total combatant troops in the Indian Army and, if the 19,000 Gurkhas recruited from the independent State of Nepal are excluded, the Punjab contingent amounts to 62 per cent. of the whole Indian Army. We are aware of the suggestion, which is sometimes put forward, that this contrast does not represent so much a difference in military quality as a deliberate policy adopted by the Army authorities for some sinister purpose. The simplest and shortest answer is furnished by the figures of recruitment from India during the Great War, when it cannot be suggested that any discouragement was offered to recruitment in any area. Bengal, with a population of 45 millions, provided 7,000 combatant

recruits; the Punjab, with a population of 20 millions, provided 349,000 such recruits. The Punjab and the United Provinces between them provided three-fourths of the total number of combatant recruits raised throughout British India.\*

The plain fact is that the formation of an Indian National Army drawn from India as a whole, in which every member will recognise the rest as his comrades, in which Indian officers will lead men who may be of different races, and in which public opinion will have general confidence, is a task of the greatest possible difficulty. Strenuous efforts are being made by many Indian politicians to develop a more general sense of citizenship, and these efforts have the sympathy of all who sincerely desire to see the growth of Indian unity. The Army authorities are taking their share in the work of reducing the disparity which is no doubt due to economic and climatic considerations, and to the unseen but potent influences of tradition and of race. Cadet corps in the various universities are paid for out of Army funds. In 1923 the Territorial Forces Act was passed, and 23 Territorial units (including four urban battalions) have been formed

\*The following extract from "India's Contribution to the Great War", published by authority of the Government of India, Calcutta, 1923, illustrates the share each province took in obtaining combatant and non-combatant recruits up to the Armistice :—

Province.	Combatant recruits enlisted.	Non-com- batant recruits enlisted.	Total.
Madras	51,223	41,117	92,340
Bombay	41,272	30,211	71,483
Bengal	7,117	51,935	59,052
United Provinces	163,578	117,565	281,143
Punjab	349,688	97,288	446,976
North-West Frontier Province	32,181	13,050	45,231
Beluchistan	1,761	327	2,088
Burma	14,094	4,579	18,673
Bihar and Orissa	8,576	32,976	41,552
Central Provinces	5,376	9,631	15,007
Assam	942	14,182	15,124
Ajmer-Merwara	7,341	1,632	8,973
Total	683,149	414,493	1,097,642

In addition, a total of 58,904 recruits were obtained from Nepal.

in all parts of India, in which the selection is not limited to the classes recruited in the regular Army. But the change is bound to be slow, and the obvious fact that India is not, in the ordinary and natural sense, a single nation is nowhere made more plain than in considering the differences between the martial races of India and the rest...As things are, the presence of British troops and the leadership of British officers secure that the fighting regiments of India, though representing only a portion of India's manhood shall not be a menace to the millions who are conducting their civil occupations without any thought of the consequences which might ensue if British troops were withdrawn and the Indian Army consisted of nothing but representatives of the Indian fighting races. It is manifest that the peaceful unity of a self-governing India would be exposed to great risks if it relied, for the purpose of maintaining and restoring internal order, solely upon Indian troops, drawn from selected areas and special races, such as the Punjabi, the Pathan, the Sikh, the Maharatta or (to go outside India) the Gurkha. Indian statesmen, in developing their ideas of self-government for India as a whole, will, as it seems to us, have to face these questions in a practical spirit, with a full realisation of their complexity, for generalisations about self-government are no substitute for a frank examination of the special difficulties of the Indian case in relation to the defence problem.” (I.S.C.R., I, 96-8.)

(c) *Obligations to Indian Princes.*—“It is clear that it is impossible for the Crown, upon whom the States rely, to lose control of the instrument by the use of which in case of need the obligations of the Crown could be discharged.” (I.S.C.R., II, 169.)

The contention of the Simon Commission for a British element in the Army on the above grounds has evoked criticisms from certain sections of, and individual, Indians.

(a) *Internal security.*—(p) The Hon’ble Sir Sankaran Nair, the Hon’ble Raja Nawab Ali Khan and the Hon’ble Sardar Bahadur Shivdeo Singh Uberoi in their memorandum have argued that it is not correct to say that the policy of Government is to employ British troops for internal security.

"One-third of the Army in India is said to be kept to preserve internal peace and tranquillity. It is argued that for the purpose it is necessary to maintain a certain number of British troops in India; and the larger part of the British garrison of some 60,000 men, namely, 28 out of the 45 battalions, are allotted to internal security purposes. It has been stated before us that it would not be right to ask Indian troops to shoot Indians in riots, etc., and that therefore British troops are and have been employed for that purpose. As a matter of fact this is not borne out by recent occurrences. The British troops were employed to carry out measures for the suppression of plague in Poona towards the end of the last century, and it is from that episode that the alienation of the Indians from the Government took its origin. The British troops, we feel certain, will no longer be employed for similar purposes.

The next great event which required the use of troops was the disturbances which followed Lord Curzon's partition of Bengal. The Muslims were on the side of the Government, upholding the partition: the Hindus who opposed the partition were supposed to be the offenders; the troops employed were the Gurkhas and not the British.

In the Punjab riots also the troops employed were the Hindu Gurkhas.

One more instance is furnished by the Moplah riots in Malabar. The leaders there were both Muslims and Hindus. On that occasion British troops the Hindus were attacked by the Moplahs, who considered it an act of treachery to themselves. The outbreak was finally quelled by Indian troops, the Gurkhas and Kachins, who alone could follow the Moplahs into the hills. That British troops are indispensable for quelling riots and Indian troops are not employed for the purpose is not thus a fact; in fact, it is now well recognised that it would be very impolitic to employ British troops; because greater resentment is felt against the Government on account of anything done by British troops; and if one may judge from the practice in recent times it has become the fixed policy of the Indian Government to employ Indian troops alone wherever possible." (I.C.C., 1345.)

(q) In the same memorandum they have further argued that the British troops for internal security could be replaced by police.

"Before the mutiny the troops were intended both for war and for maintaining internal peace; but when the mutiny was quelled, the police force was created in order to keep the peace. If it has not been entirely successful for the purpose for which it was created, the fault lay with those who are responsible for the organisation of the force. There is little doubt that in Indian hands the police will be a force quite efficient for the purpose for which it was formed; and the troops may be dispensed with except for purposes for which they might be employed in England. The military budget would thus be cut down by the amount required for the troops which are now kept for police purposes." (I. C. C., 135.)

(r) Sir Hari Singh Gour in his memorandum has quoted General Robinson to prove that the British element in the Army for internal security is capable of reduction.

"With regard to the first problem, we may note that the suppression of local rebellion, riot and disorder, has been greatly simplified by the advent of the aeroplane and the armoured car; for these weapons, apart from their fire-power and their immunity from counteraction, possess that capability of striking a swift blow which, especially in the East, multiplies greatly the value of force. Internal troubles present their gravest dangers when expressed in non-co-operative, in interference with communications and in sabotage of works. Such action can only be defeated by a firm administration in Delhi and in London." (I. C. C., 341.)

(s) The Indian Central Committee have expressed the opinion that the British troops should be replaced by *Provincial Armies*.

"The grant of complete responsible Government to any province is bound up with the question of the maintenance of law and order and internal security generally. Experience has proved that civil disorders not infrequently arise which are too serious to be dealt with by the ordinary police force.

At present the civil authorities have the right, subject to certain limitations, to call upon the military to aid the civil power. It is uncertain whether this right will be conceded to a responsible provincial Government. As regards the use of British troops, it is obvious that provincial self-government will not be a reality as long as provincial Governments look to a foreign mercenary army for the enforcement of their policy. Nor is it by any means certain that the British Government will agree to the use of British troops to enforce a policy for which they are not responsible and over which they have no control. On the other hand, the use of regular Indian troops involves certain risks. In time of communal tension it can hardly fail to happen that the sympathies of the men who compose the regular army are involved on one side or the other. In our opinion, it is of the utmost importance that the discipline of the army should not be strained through its use to quell communal disturbances, and that other means than the use of regular troops should be found for dealing with internal disturbances in provinces which have been granted complete control over their own affairs." (I. C. C., 589.) On these considerations they have contended that the provincial Governments should be vested with the right to raise local armies. "The experiment—for experiment it will be—is not one that we would forthwith recommend for trial throughout India; but we see no real risk and much advantage in its adoption in the South of Peninsula. The majority of us accordingly recommend that it should be open to the Governments of Madras and Bombay to equip and maintain a local military force and a local militia. The minimum numbers of the force or militia, its equipment and qualifications, should be prescribed by the Government of India. The Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief should always be entitled to inspect the troops and pass orders for their efficiency and maintenance; but they should not be entitled to direct a reduction of the force or any other step which will render the force less efficient." As to the size of such armies, they are satisfied that "financial considerations alone render it certain that no provincial Government will raise a force larger than is actually required." (I.C.C., 59.)

The suggestion has received support from other considerations. The Simon Commission have pointed out that the peaceful unity of a self-governing India would be exposed to great risks if it relied, for the purpose of maintaining internal order, solely upon Indian troops drawn from selected areas and special races, such as the Punjabi, the Pathan, the Sikh, the Maharatta, or the Gurkha. If Provincial Armies are raised and equipped with necessary modern armaments, that menace is likely to be checked to a great extent and an equilibrium in military power established among the different provinces. This point was urged by Dr. Ambedkar in the Committee of Whole Conference (Round Table Conference) on Report of Sub-Committee No. VII (Defence), where he moved an amendment in the following terms:—

“That immediate steps be taken to see that recruitment to the Indian Army is thrown open to all subjects of His Majesty, including the depressed classes, consistently with considerations of efficiency and the possession of the necessary qualifications....It is a great public danger that any community in India should be allowed to monopolise any service in the country. I say it is a great public danger, because it not only excites a sense of superiority in those particular communities which have been placed in that position of advantage, but it also jeopardises the welfare of the people by making them dependent upon the protection afforded to them by certain specific communities.”  
(R. T. C., 379-80.)

The question of Provincial Armies has been looked at from another standpoint. The Simon Commission have pointed out that the withdrawal of British troops from the self-governing Dominions has ‘left them to organise such local forces as they thought fit, recruited and officered from within their own boundaries, and administered by a department of Government which requires to spend but a small fraction of their revenues on the purpose. These Dominion units, drawn as they are for the most part from a homogeneous population, constitute a nucleus out of which, as the experience of 1914-1918 showed, immensely powerful armies of the highest fighting quality may be developed under the stress

of emergency." (I.S.C.R., I, 93-4). Provincial Armies in India would also, it has been argued, for the most part be drawn from homogeneous populations and thus form a nucleus, which could be contracted or expanded according to necessity, enabling Provincial Governments to keep down the expenditure to the minimum in times of peace.

The desirability of Provincial Armies has also been urged from the point of view of Greater India federation. The Native States at present maintain bodies of efficient forces (called Indian States forces) for co-operation with the Indian Army, both in external defence of India and the maintenance of internal order, inspection staff being provided and paid for by the Government of India. It is stated that Provincial Armies would be a logical extension of this system and would help the entry of the States into the federation with their present right of maintaining local armies unimpaired, and the entry of the provinces with equal right with the States in a matter of such vital importance.

Yet another argument has been advanced in favour of Provincial Armies, which at the present moment has undoubtedly some importance. Such armies will provide employment to a fair number of unemployed middle class youths who under the stress of unemployment are now being driven into crimes against society and will so long as they are without employment continue to be a menace to peace and order even in a self-governing India.

The question was also subjected to examination by the Government of India. In their "Despatch On Proposals For Constitutional Reforms" they observed, "We have considered also an alternative suggestion that a certain number of units, over and above those set apart under the existing scheme for Indianization within the army, should be handed over to provincial Governments to be maintained by them as provincial battalions. These battalions would normally be employed by the provincial Governments on duties connected with law and order, for the preservation of which they are, under the Commission's proposals, to become primarily responsible. They might also develop, in the course of time, into units capable of taking their place in the field army.

They would in fact be raised and maintained by provincial Governments in precisely the same way as Imperial State forces are raised and maintained by the rulers of the larger Indian States. They would be inspected and supervised by a central agency similar to, and possibly amalgamated with, the Military Adviser-in-Chief and his assistants. For every provincial battalion so constituted, a corresponding unit of the regular army would be brought under reduction: and the provincial Government would receive, out of the resultant saving to army estimates, such financial contribution as was required to maintain the new unit on an adequate footing. Provincial battalions, like the Indianizing units in the regular army, would be officered by Indians commissioned through an Indian military college. It is claimed for the scheme that, by encouraging the development of localized forces, it would help to broaden the basis of recruitment and perhaps foster willingness to undertake military service among communities who show no enthusiasm for it at present. Meanwhile, the Imperial Army would not run the risk of including more experimental, and to that extent, ineffective units than it could carry. At the same time, there would be no restriction of the field of employment for young Indian commissioned officers, many of whom might prefer service in provincial units of this character to service in the Imperial Army. The suggestion, therefore, has something in its favour from the purely military point of view. It is, however, open to some of the same objections as the proposal of the Indian Statutory Commission: (see under 'Dominion Army') nor have we any reason to suppose that provincial Governments or provincial sentiment would welcome it. There is no evidence at present of a movement in any part of India for the establishment of provincial military forces.

Apart from these considerations, the creation of any new type of armed forces would form, in our opinion, an unnecessary complication. We already have regular troops with British officers, and regular troops in process of Indianization. We have also the territorial forces, and the various battalions of military police maintained by provincial Governments. We doubt if there is room for provincialized forces in addition to all these. We would greatly prefer that all

units hereafter selected for Indianization should retain the status and functions of regular fighting troops: and we have little doubt that Indian sentiment would support us in this view. We think that the advantages of a provincial or local connection could be equally well attained by assigning certain stations as permanent headquarters to some of the Indianizing units of the regular Army." (Despatch, 145-6.)

*Dominion Army:* In this connection it may be observed that the Simon Commission put forward a tentative proposal for the creation of a separate army of a "Dominion" pattern, recruited for purposes of internal security. "Does it necessarily follow that India's attainment of self-government as a unit of the British Empire must be postponed till India recruits and officers from men of Indian races a complete Army for external defence by land, any more than it has proved necessary to postpone self-government in the Dominions until each Dominion provided its exclusive defence at sea? The time may come when some intermediate solution will offer itself. One such solution which has sometimes been discussed might perhaps be that Indian troops of a Dominion pattern commanded by officers holding a Dominion commission may be recruited for purposes of internal order, while sharing with Imperial troops, the burdens of external defence, the Dominion troops being under the control of an Indian Minister while the Imperial troops remain constitutionally (as they must) under the Governor-General." (I.S.C.R., I, 106-7.) The Commission however recognised that the suggestion involved many difficulties, technical and financial and that the time for so considerable a departure had not yet come.

The scheme was subjected to close examination by the Government of India in their Despatch. "We understand the proposal to be that Government, in co-operation with the central legislature, should encourage the recruitment of battalions of a 'Dominion' pattern, commanded by officers holding a dominion commission, for purposes of internal security, that these forces should be controlled by an Indian Minister of the central Government, and that out of them a dominion army should gradually emerge as a self-contained

indigenous force, distinct from the Imperial army, in which latter army, however, the policy of Indianization should also be pursued. The Commission have left us in some doubt as to the functions of this new force, which they contemplate as being 'recruited for purposes of internal order,' but also 'sharing with Imperial troops the burden of external defence.' Nor have they defined the source from which it is to be financed, though recognizing that financial considerations will of necessity impose strict limits on its size.

This suggestion of the Commission is, however, only tentative. As we have already stated, they do not themselves consider that the time has yet arrived to decide upon it, and whether it should be adopted or not. Its adoption would in any case depend upon a definite pronouncement in its favour by Indian public opinion.....This...recommendation of the Statutory Commission would involve the existence of two distinct forces side by side, controlled, organized, equipped, financed and employed on different systems, but both of them none the less forming part of the army in India, and containing the germ of the future dominion army. We confess that we do not at present see what justification or incentive could be found for the creation of the proposed new force. Apart from financial difficulties, it is obvious that newly raised troops of this character would not for many years be as efficient as units of the regular army. Indian public opinion, so far as we know, is content that the whole army should remain under the control of the Government of India and the Commander-in-Chief. The fact that the Government of India and the Assembly were free to develop an army which might be regarded as of inferior status and of less effective fighting capacity alongside the regular army, with such funds as might be available, would not evoke any degree of popular enthusiasm: nor would it be easy to convince any one that this measure constituted an advance towards the formation of a dominion army. It must further be remembered that, in time of peace, internal security troops, as such, do not exist. All units of the army are recruited, trained, and equipped up to the full standard of efficiency required for service in the field. On the outbreak of war, units which are at the moment stationed in certain places

become, on mobilization, part of the field army, and proceed to the front. Those in certain other stations are detailed for internal security purposes; but, being fully trained, also form a valuable reserve to the troops in the field. In ordinary times however every unit is fully trained for war, and is also available for duty in aid of the civil power on the outbreak of local disorders, whatever its duties may be in the event of mobilization. Battalions trained for internal security purposes alone would not have sufficient occupation to justify their maintenance as regular forces." (Despatch, 143-5.)

(b) & (c) *Frontier Defence and Treaty Obligations.*—The necessity of British troops for (b) external defence and (c) discharge of obligations to Indian Princes can best be discussed under—

(ii) **CONTRIBUTION BY THE HOME GOVERNMENT TOWARDS MAINTENANCE OF TROOPS FOR IMPERIAL PURPOSES.**—It has been explained at some length above how India's external defence has two distinct aspects—Imperial and Indian. The question now is:—

Should Great Britain bear any portion of the cost of the maintenance of the Indian Army in consideration of the Imperial aspect of Indian's defence?

The question has been dealt with fully by the Simon Commission.

"We are assured that the size of the Army in India is not artificially enlarged with a view to making some portion of it available for service elsewhere, or for the purpose of keeping on Indian soil a reserve not needed in India at the expense of the Indian tax-payer. Its strength is not more than is calculated to be necessary for meeting the emergencies of internal disorder and the possibilities of external attack. The extent of the demands actually made upon it for these purposes naturally varies from time to time, but it has to be ready for the strain whenever the strain comes. On the other hand, in times of comparative quiet, the Government of India has often found itself able to lend to the Imperial Government units from the Army in India for service in other fields. But when such troops are lent

by the Government of India for Imperial service outside India, it is the British tax-payer, and not the Indian tax-payer, who normally pays for them, so that the sparing of troops from India may actually mean a saving for the time being to Indian revenues. It is sometimes assumed or argued that, since India has been able to lend troops for service abroad, it follows that the troops assembled in India and paid for by India save when so lent, are in excess of India's own needs. The argument is, of course, in itself fallacious. And against such an inference must also be set the consideration already referred to, viz., that circumstances might arise when the troops in India would need to be reinforced from elsewhere in the Empire. Accordingly, without questioning the proposition that the size of that Army is fixed by reference to India's needs, it is easy to see that the temporary loan of units drawn from that Army may from time to time properly take place. And the geographical position of India often makes it a very convenient quarter from which to borrow them. The real question, as it seems to us, is not whether the size and expense of the Army serving in India is greater than is needed for the twin purposes of internal order and frontier defence, but whether in connection with the latter of these purposes there is an Imperial, as opposed to a purely India, aspect which, in the absence of countervailing claims, might make it inequitable to regard its cost as falling solely upon Indian revenues." (I.S.C.R., II, 171-3.) They conclude that from Imperial considerations there must be a British element in the Army and that it would be fair if the ordinary expenditure of the Army is borne by Indian revenues. As to the case of extraordinary or war expenditure, "there is a broad distinction between the cost of expeditions or operations which are the result of tribal activities and must be considered a normal incident of the Wardenship of the Marches and exceptional expenditure rendered necessary by the organised attack of a foreign power. In the former case, the charges should, we think, fall entirely (as hitherto) on Indian revenues; while we feel that the circumstances may be such in the latter instance as to make a case for spreading the financial burden more widely." (I.S.C.R., II, 175-6.)

Neither the analysis of the problem nor the conclusions of the Simon Commission appears to have satisfied Indian opinion. The Indian criticism on this point is that if the Army is to be used both for Imperial and Indian purposes the entire cost of its maintenance during peace time, when there is no "organised attack of a foreign power," should not be charged on Indian revenues alone.

The obvious reply to this criticism is that the proper cost of India's defence by land and by sea against her own, as distinguished from her "Imperial," enemies would be many times more than her expenditure under the present arrangements. As the Simon Commission point out, "Although India's long coastline enjoys the protection of the British Navy, her present contribution towards the heavy burden which this places upon the British tax-payer is only £100,000 a year. It has to be remembered that the security of India from external aggression is immensely increased by the knowledge that the whole of the military resources of Britain would, if necessary, be available for her protection." (I.S.C.R., II, 174.)

Indians however contend that the same argument is not applied to the Dominions which maintain armies only for domestic purposes. Their armies like the Indian Army are not "in times of comparative quiet" meant to be lent to Imperial Government for service in other fields.

It is further urged that the economic prosperity of Great Britain is intimately bound up with the economic prosperity of India, and that therefore the benefit derived from the protection afforded by the British Navy and the knowledge of the military resources of Great Britain in the background is not of India alone.

Another point is stressed in this connection. It is that the dominating feature of India's Army expenditure in recent years has been due to mechanisation of the Army and that the mechanisation is being carried out primarily for Imperial purposes. Sir Hari Singh Gour quotes General Robinson in support of this contention.

"There is a last military question to be considered, not indeed of defence, but of means and method. The Home

Army, to meet the requirements of European warfare, is undergoing a process of mechanisation. To enable the process to be continued, either India must follow suit as regards British troops, or the Cardwell system, on which the Army has so long been based and which has proved its worth so well, must be scrapped. In spite of her mountainous war-theatres India has, after considerable thought, decided to mechanise. And, fortunately, there is a solution ready to hand for the satisfaction of her conflicting tasks in mountain and plain; for the mechanisation of a large part of the British troops will strengthen them greatly for duties of internal security on which they are largely employed; and it will add to their value in all roaded areas on and beyond the border and in such countries as Palestine and Iraq, while the Indian Army, unmechanised, will continue to furnish all the cavalry, infantry and pack artillery likely to be needed in rougher terrain either in the East or Middle East." (I. C. C., 341.)

The financial effect of the mechanisation has undoubtedly been burdensome for India, as may be seen from the following comparative figures of expenditure on armaments:—

	Million gold frances.
United States .. .. ..	4,453
Great Britain .. .. ..	2,900
Russia .. .. ..	2,440
France .. .. ..	2,286
Italy .. .. ..	1,333
Japan .. .. ..	1,215
India .. .. ..	1,069
Germany .. .. ..	942
Australia .. .. ..	151
Canada .. .. ..	93
Irish Free State .. .. ..	76
New Zealand .. .. ..	25
South Africa .. .. ..	25

The contention that mechanisation is being carried out from purely Imperial, as distinguished from Indian, considerations, seems however to be based on the unjustifiably optimistic presumption that India's battles are for all times

going to be confined to her mountainous land frontiers. Such a contention must also lose its point when it is urged that the British troops should be replaced gradually by Indian troops.

The discharge of treaty obligations of the Paramount Power towards Native States by remaining "in India with whatever military and naval forces may be requisite to enable it to discharge that function" is again urged to be a matter of purely Imperial concern. The charges for the maintenance of British or Indian troops for the purpose should, it is argued, be borne by the British Exchequer. It may be pointed out that a certain number of States pay tributes to the Crown varying in amount, according to the circumstances of each case, which are absorbed in the revenues of India.

Some of the arguments dwelt on above appear to have engaged the attention of the authorities seriously and even to have independently been advanced by the Government of India. Mr. Layton in his report to the Simon Commission has mentioned that negotiations are now proceeding between the Indian and British Governments on a claim by Government of India "that as the cost of the defence of India is an Imperial necessity some contribution should be made from other than Indian sources." (I.S.C.R., II, 223.)

(iii) ABOLITION OF "CAPITATION CHARGES."—In the memorandum referred to above Sir Sankaran Nair and two other members of the Indian Central Committee have discussed the matter in some detail.

"Take the question of the capitation rate, i.e., the cost of raising, training, equipping and transporting annual reliefs and drafts from England. In 1907 the India Office, through their representatives, Sir John Edge and Sir Beauchamp Duff, contended that the capitation rate ought to be abolished and resisted the claim of the War Office in respect of it. An arbitrator decided against them. The Government of India, however, continued to resist this claim up to 1928 when it was apparently decided that the questions involved should be submitted for the consideration of an independent tribunal....

Not only had India to pay the capitation rate while the case was *sub judice*; while she was contesting the claim, the

capitation rate was also increased from £7 10s. per head to £11 8s. and she had to pay this money during the Great War, although at that time there was no transportation of the annual drafts and reliefs.

Again in 1924 the rate of £11 8s. per head was raised to £28 10s. with retrospective effect from 1st April, 1920.” (I. C. C., 136.)

It would appear that “negotiations are now proceeding between the Indian and British Governments on the War Office claim for an increase in the Capitation Charges (now amounting to two crores annually) which are paid for the training in England of recruits for the army in India and on the counterclaim of the Government of India that she should be released from the existing Capitation payment.” (I.S.C.R., II, 223.)

(iv) INDIANISATION OF THE HIGHER COMMAND OF THE ARMY.—This question has received the closest attention from Indians in recent years.

Indianisation has been urged both on financial and political considerations. “A completely self-governing India must be in a position to provide itself with armed forces, fit to undertake the tasks which armed forces in India have to discharge so far as these tasks are the special concern of India itself.” Complete Indianisation of the higher command of the Army must, therefore, be an ultimate constitutional necessity. On the financial side, it is stated that Indianisation would lead to lowering of the rates of pay, allowances and pension in accordance with India’s financial capacity and to consequent reduction in the Army budget.

It will be worthwhile to deal with the question of Indianisation in some detail.

(a) *Historical*.—Although, from 1905, there had been a special form of commissioned rank for Indian officers, the latter could rise no higher than the position of company officer in a regimental unit, and could only hold the power of command over Indians. These limitations were perhaps natural, since the supply of officers was obtained from non-commissioned ranks, and many of those promoted had neither

the education nor the training to fit them for higher commands. But it was also to be expected that, with no prospects of promotion to high rank, few educated young men would look upon a military career with favour.

In recognition of the services of Indian arms in the Allied cause, Indians in 1918 were declared eligible to hold the King's Commission, which carried with it the power to command British troops. The same year a Cadet School for young Indians, with 49 cadets, was opened at Indore, and ten vacancies each year were allotted to Indians at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst. The Indore School was closed after one year, 39 of the cadets receiving commissions, but the Sandhurst vacancies were retained and remained as the only method by which Indians could qualify for King's Commissions in the Army in India.

The Legislative Assembly passed some resolutions on the 8th March, 1921, in pursuance of which the Prince of Wales Royal Indian Military College was established at Dehra Dun in 1922. This College provided for the training of prospective candidates for the Sandhurst examinations.

Shortly afterwards, on the 17th February, 1923, the Commander-in-Chief in India announced that an important advance towards the Indianisation of the army had been begun by the decision to set apart eight Indian units, comprising cavalry and infantry, which would gradually, but as quickly as possible, be entirely staffed by Indian officers who were qualified by their rank and length of service for senior posts. This scheme, which became known as the Eight Units Scheme, was intended to give Indian officers every opportunity of proving that units officered by Indians could be efficient in every way.

The attention of the Government of India was again drawn to the question of Indianisation of the Army by the Legislative Assembly in July, 1923, but the next step of real importance was due to a resolution of February, 1925, which led to the appointment of the Indian Sandhurst Committee, popularly known as the Skeen Committee.

At this time the position was as follows:—

- (i) There were still ten vacancies annually at Sandhurst.

- (ii) Commissioned Indian officers were eligible to serve only in cavalry and infantry units. They could not qualify for the other arms of the Service—Artillery, Engineers, Signal Corps, Tank Corps, or Air Force.
- (iii) The Prince of Wales Royal Indian Military College prepared 70 cadets each year for the Sandhurst examination and training.
- (iv) Candidates for Sandhurst were required to undergo a somewhat complicated process of elimination before they were allowed to appear for the written, medical and oral examinations which determined their future.
- (v) Only 243 boys had competed for 83 vacancies in the eight years during which the scheme had been in force.
- (vi) Since 1918, 83 boys had been admitted to Sandhurst, of whom 19 had failed and 18 were still under training.
- (vii) Forty-four boys had passed, and of these 42 held King's Commissions in the Indian Army.

(b) *The Skeen Committee.*—The Skeen Committee, which was appointed in June, 1925, consisted of one European and twelve Indian members, under the chairmanship of Sir Andrew Skeen, K.C.B., K.C.I.E., C.M.G., Chief of the General Staff.

The report of the Committee began by stating the definite opinion that the existing scheme for the recruitment of Indian officers was a failure, and gave the following reasons:—

- (i) The Indian system of education was such that candidates for Sandhurst had not had the advantages of character training, physical training, and preliminary military training which were common in English schools. They were therefore handicapped when they entered Sandhurst.
- (ii) Sufficient publicity regarding the advantages of a military career had not been given by Government.

- (iii) The method of application and selection was too rigidly official and preference was given to the sons of soldiers.
- (iv) Parents hesitated to send young boys to England, even if they could meet the high costs of the preliminary training at Dehra Dun, and subsequently at Sandhurst.
- (v) The "Eight Units Scheme" was an "invidious form of segregation" which, besides depriving young officers of the help of British officers, was in direct conflict with the principle of co-operation between British and Indian officers adopted in all departments of Government service.
- (vi) The present provisions for Indianising the army were too narrow in scope, for, in effect, it meant the supply of only ten King's Commissioned officers annually, and these only for the infantry or cavalry.

The recommendations of the Committee were of the most comprehensive type. A summary of these is contained in Appendix I of the report, which may be briefly stated as follows:—

- (i) In 1928, 20 vacancies at Sandhurst should be allotted to Indians, with a progressive increase year by year until an Indian college was established.
- (ii) From 1928 eight vacancies should be created in the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, and two in the Royal Air Force College, Cranwell, with an annual increase, so that Indian boys might qualify for commissions in the Artillery, Engineer, Signal, Tank and Air arms of the Army in India.
- (iii) A military college, with accommodation at first for 100 cadets should be created in 1933, and the establishment should be increased each year. The course should be a three-year one and should qualify for King's Commissions in the Land Forces.
- (iv) Twenty vacancies annually should continue to be allotted at Sandhurst from 1933.

- (v) The College at Dehra Dun should continue as a military institution concerned with the preparation of boys for the army and navy.
- (vi) A similar college should be opened in another part of India.
- (vii) The Government of India should impress on educational authorities the national importance of reforming the educational system of India.
- (viii) Greater publicity should be given to the advantages of a military career.
- (ix) Entrance to the college should be by open competitive examination, and the method of selection should be simplified.
- (x) The "Eight Units Scheme" should be abandoned.

(c) *The Nehru Report*.—The Report of the Committee appointed in 1928 by the All-Parties Conference, commonly known as the Nehru Committee, failed to deal adequately with the problem of Indian defence and with the Indianisation of the army. In a brief hurried reference to army problems in the introduction they stated that it was not necessary to wait until an Indian or Dominion army was created before India could obtain Dominion Status and recommended that control of the existing army in India should immediately be handed over to Ministers. It was not clear from the report whether the suggestion was that all British troops and officers should be withdrawn.

(d) *The Indian Central Committee*.—The Indian Central Committee was the next body to take up the question as part of its inquiry in February, 1929. They recommended that provision should be made to man the Indian portion of the army with Indians so that ultimately the entire defence of the country could be taken over by Indians; and also that the recommendations of the Skeen Committee should be carried out in the manner suggested in their report.

(e) *Simon Commission*.—In discussing the developments in Indianisation which had already taken place the Simon

Commission commented on the "Eight Units Scheme" as follows.

"We do not feel competent to judge of the technical considerations involved. We understand that the Army authorities take the view that, as a matter of precaution and as the best security that efficiency should be maintained, the experiment of Indianisation should be conducted by a method which would not involve all units of the Army at the same time, and which will give some solid indication of the comparative efficiency of Indianised units at an earlier stage than might be possible, if the same number of Indian officers were spread more generally throughout the Army in India. As the number of units undergoing Indianisation is capable of augmentation in the light of experience and in accordance with the supply of officers obtained, no artificial limit to the acceptance of Indian officers is imposed. But whatever the justification for the decision, its announcement has been widely represented in India as a refusal to adopt a more liberal treatment of the problem of Indianisation. These critics point out that Sir Andrew Skeen was prepared to see Indian and British officers serving side by side in the same regiment, while the effect of the 'Eight Units Scheme' is to bring about what they call the 'segregation' of Indian officers, and to secure that no British officer serves under the command of an Indian superior in his own regiment. Our duty is not to pronounce judgment on this matter, but to record the course of events, and to give the best account we can of the state of Indian political feeling resulting from it. We were told that 'Eight Units Scheme' is by no means so unpopular with the Indian officers who take part in carrying it out as with some sections of political opinion. However, for the purposes of the constitutional inquiry upon which we are engaged, the method by which Indianisation might proceed is not so immediately important as the fact that it has at length begun, and that it is recognised that the pace at which it proceeds is conditioned by the efficiency of the results obtained." (I.S.C.R., I, 102, 105.)

On the question of Indianisation of the Higher Command they thus expressed themselves.

"At the present moment, no Indian holding the King's Commission is of higher army rank than a Captain—there are, we believe, 39 Captains of whom 25 are in ordinary regimental employ. Some of them are of an age which would prevent their attaining much higher rank, even if they passed the necessary examination, before retirement. Most of these have not been through Sandhurst, but got their commissions during the Great War. Now, however genuine may be the desire, and however earnest the endeavour, to work for this transformation, the overriding condition so forcibly expressed by the Skeen Committee (whose members, apart from the Chairman and the Army Secretary, were Indian gentlemen) in the words 'progress...must be contingent upon success being secured at each stage and upon military efficiency being maintained throughout' must in any case render such development measured and slow. A Higher Command cannot be evolved at short notice out of the existing cadres of Indian officers, all of junior rank and limited experience. Not until the slender trickle of suitable Indian recruits for the officer class—and we earnestly desire an increase in their numbers—flows in much greater volume, not until sufficient Indians have attained the experience and training requisite to provide all the officers for, at any rate, some Indian regiments, not until such units have stood the only test which can possibly determine their efficiency, and not until Indian officers have qualified by a successful army career for high command, will it be possible to develop the policy of Indianisation to a point which will bring a completely Indianised Army within sight. Even then, years must elapse before the process could be completed." (I.S.C.R., II, 168-9.)

(f) *The Round Table Conference (First Session).*—The recommendations of the Simon Commission were considered by the Defence Sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference. This Sub-Committee consisted of 23 Indian and 6 European members. The majority of the Sub-Committee considered it impossible to decide upon the rate of Indianisation or to lay down rules that might embarrass those responsible for defence; but a minority favoured complete

Indianisation of officers within a specified period, subject to the requirements of efficiency and to the provision of suitable candidates.

The main resolutions of the Sub-Committee were—

- (i) The Defence of India must, to an increasing extent, be the concern of the Indian people.
- (ii) The rate of Indianisation of the army must be substantially increased.
- (iii) A training college should be established in India as early as possible, and existing vacancies at Sandhurst, Woolwich and Cranwell should be retained.
- (iv) The Government of India should set up a committee of experts to work out details of the college scheme.
- (v) The possibility of reducing the number of British troops in India should be investigated.

(g) *The Round Table Conference (Second Session)* mainly concerned itself with the constitutional aspect of the control of the Army which will be dealt with in the next chapter.

(h) *The Indian Military College Committee*.—While the general principles of Defence were still being considered by the Round Table Conference, progress was being made with the most important problem in the Indianisation of the Army; that of providing for the recruitment and training of large numbers of young officers.

The Indian Military College Committee, consisting of eleven Indians and six Europeans, with the Commander-in-Chief as Chairman, made the following, among other, recommendations in their report published in July—

- (i) Of the sixty vacancies annually, 30 should be allotted to cadets from the ranks of the Indian Army, 24 should be open to competition, and six should be filled by the nomination of the Commander-in-Chief. (Four members dissented, proposing different proportions.)
- (ii) Cadets admitted to the college should undertake to serve in the army for a period of five years from the date on which they are commissioned.

- (iii) In addition to 60 vacancies a year for British India there should be 20 vacancies annually for Indian State Force Cadets.
- (iv) In view of the very high cost of maintaining a Flying Training School, Indian cadets should continue to go to Cranwell; but the possibility of starting a small flying training school in India should be carefully investigated.
- (v) All young Indian officers should be attached to British Units in India for one year.
- (vi) The recommendations of the Skeen Committee regarding the expansion of Dehra Dun College should be carried out.
- (vii) In order to prevent differentiation and the possibility of the adoption of a superior attitude by officers trained in England, the vacancies in English Cadet colleges should be abolished.
- (viii) The college should be set up at Dehra Dun.
- (ix) Every effort should be made to establish the college on its permanent site by the autumn of 1932.

In pursuance of the recommendations, the Indian Military Academy for the training of candidates for commission in the Indian Army will open at Dehra Dun on 1st October, 1932, and notifications have already issued for a preliminary entrance examination of candidates in March 1932.

Such then is the history of the Indianisation of the Higher Command in the Indian Army. How far such Indianisation will reduce the Army expenditure is however a point in which there will be considerable difference of opinion. One may venture to say that the Indian units officered entirely by Indians is not likely to be of equal military value and if more units have to be employed some of the presumed savings would certainly be lost.

## CHAPTER IV.

### Constitutional Problems.

Till a little over a decade ago, Indians were content to leave to the British Government the questions of control over the Army and the Army expenditure. Having suffered disorder and misrule for centuries they were entirely grateful for the Pax Britannica and unquestioningly paid for the Army which sanctioned the Pax. All that they pressed for from time to time were extended opportunities for military service in the Higher Command.

There was however a change in outlook with the Great War when the resultant upheaval in ideas quickened the desire for responsible government among the Indians. The recognition of this desire by His Majesty's Government in 1919 still further stimulated it. The question of control over the Army naturally came more and more to occupy the Indian mind. For India to be completely self-governing must possess control over the armed forces necessary for her internal and external defence.

(a) GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT, 1919.—Under the constitution set up by this Act, Army is a "reserved" subject. Though nearly the whole of the Army expenditure is "non-voted," the Governor-General has discretion to throw open the non-votable heads of expenditure to discussion by both the Legislative Assembly and the Council of State. In practice, the Governor-General has invariably given directions enabling Army expenditure as a whole to be discussed by the Legislative Assembly. Usually Army expenditure and policy has been allowed to be criticised through motions for reductions in the expenditure for the Secretariat establishment which is "voted." Under this constitution the Commander-in-Chief is also *ex officio* Army Member of the Governor-General's Council.

(b) NEHRU COMMITTEE.—The first serious attack from the side of Indian nationalism on this constitutional position of the Army came in 1928.\* In their introduction to this Report the Nehru Committee quoted Professor Keith's pungent observation, "that self-Government without an effective Indian Army is an impossibility and no amount of protests or demonstrations, or denunciations of the Imperial Government can alter the fact," and added, "This is true but we do not accept the constitutional position that without an Indian or dominion Army India cannot attain dominion status. In the first place, the Indian army has not to be created; it exists there already. In the next place, historically the position taken by our critics is not correct.

"We venture to quote on this subject from the speech of Sir Sivaswamy Iyer in the Legislative Assembly, delivered on February 18, 1924. Sir Sivaswamy Iyer is a gentleman who has made a special study of the problem of the army in India and we have no hesitation in quoting him. 'But with regard to the problem of the army, I have only to observe this, that so far as my reading of colonial history goes, none of the colonies was in a position to assume its defence at the time when a self-governing status was granted to it. For many years, the colonies were not even able to pay for their defence. It was the Home Government that had to contribute towards the military expenditure of the colonies. We, on the other hand, have from the beginning paid for our army. We have not merely paid for our army but we have raised our troops. We have raised and maintained our Indian troops and we have also maintained the British troops and paid for them. We have gone further than the colonies have done in the matter of undertaking our defence. No doubt, Sir Malcolm Hailey is right in saying that full dominion self-government implies the capacity to undertake the defence, not merely by paying for it but also by undertaking its officering and administration. But that was not a condition which was insisted upon in the case of any of the colonies. So far as defence against internal disturbances

---

\* Lord (then Sir S. P.) Sinha's Presidential Address at the 30th Indian National Congress, 1915, did not deal with the constitutional position of the Army in India.

was concerned, that no doubt was a condition which was pointed out to the colonies as essential some years after they were granted their self-governing status. But so far as defence against external aggression was concerned, I am not aware that the duty has been laid upon them even now. As regards naval defence, the obligation has not been laid upon them.'

We have recommended in our report the transfer of the control over the Indian army with the necessary guarantees for the pay, emoluments, allowances and pensions of the officers. We believe that the representation of the army in the legislature by a responsible minister, who will, in actual administration, no doubt be guided by expert advice, is bound to lead to the establishment of more intimate relations between the army and the legislature, and thus secure a continuous supply of funds for the Army. As matters stand at present, the army budget is sacrosanct. Under the statute it is not open to discussion 'unless the Governor-General otherwise directs,' but in any case it is not subject to the vote of the legislature. The position, at the present moment, is that the Eight Units Scheme is the only serious attempt, that has hitherto been made at Indianising the army, and even if it is accelerated it should take at least a century before the army will be really Indianised. The fate of the Skeen Committee's report which condemned the Eight Units Scheme is well known, and the proposal to increase the number of candidates for Sandhurst is scarcely calculated to lead to the Indianisation of the army within a reasonable distance of time. We do not agree with the view that the supply of candidates for Sandhurst could not have been larger than what it has been. We feel that the method of selection hitherto followed has left much to be desired. But we do not believe that an adequate degree of efficiency in the training of officers cannot be achieved in India if measures necessary to that end are adopted. It should be the first care of the responsible government of India to take her self-contained in military as in other matters. We have, accordingly, made provision in our report for a statutory obligation on the Government to establish military training schools and colleges. As a matter of further precaution, we have

provided for the establishment of a Committee of Defence, based more or less on well-known models." (A.P.C.R., 13-4.)

(c) SIMON COMMISSION.—The argument of the Nehru Committee came in for severe criticism from the Simon Commission. The quotation from the Speech of Sir Sivaswami Iyer and the reliance placed upon it by the Nehru Committee "seem to suggest that the real nature of the difference between India's military problem and that of the self-governing Dominions, which we have tried to set out in the preceding paragraphs, has not been fully apprehended. The difference largely depends upon understanding what is the urgency of the risks in the two cases. It may be true that when a particular Colony has acquired self-government it could not have defended itself against an onslaught from well-armed invaders, but the point is that the other Dominions are so placed and circumstanced that the practical risk did not exist. The test in each case is the ability to meet not imaginary or far-fetched risks, but real ones. A man does not need to insure against earthquakes in regions where it is practically inconceivable that earthquakes should occur. And the question is not whether, in the early days of self-government, Canada could have withstood an invasion such as might pour through the Khyber into the plains of India, but whether she could handle any sudden risks reasonably incident to her own frontiers. In point of fact the Colony of Natal was unable to secure an earlier attainment of self-government because the Zulus and Boers on her borders were a menace too constant and too formidable for Natal to deal with, if the British forces were withdrawn. The difficulties of the Indian military situation simply do not exist elsewhere in the Empire, and it is therefore no use claiming that the absence of such difficulties elsewhere proves that India can proceed, smoothly and rapidly, to complete self-government by ignoring the formidable obstacle in her path.

It is equally fallacious to suggest that India can attain complete self-government because it already has an Indian Army which is sufficient to defend it. By 'Indian Army' is presumably meant the Indian regiments, which form only a portion of the Army in India, and which are not the forces

whose use is preferred when communal feeling needs to be restrained. But even the Indian regiments are as yet officered almost entirely by British officers, so unless the authors of the Nehru Report contemplate that a self-governing India will, in the normal course, have at its service, and under the direction of its Minister for War, large numbers of British officers holding the King's Commission, it is apparent that a good deal has to be done before the question of defence, in relation to Indian constitutional progress, can be said to be solved.

We are not indeed clear, from perusing the brief passage in the introduction to the Nehru Report, whether what its authors contemplate is that when complete self-government is attained in India British troops and officers will be all withdrawn. It surely cannot be supposed that large bodies of British soldiers would remain available for the purposes of maintaining and restoring order when the Army in India is under a Minister responsible to an Indian Legislature. We shall point out later the considerations which we think must be borne in mind and applied in order that the road towards the goal of complete self-government may not continue to be indefinitely blocked by the military difficulty. But the problem of the Army in India in relation to the attainment of self-government cannot be treated as solved by vague and misleading references to the development of self-government in other parts of the Empire, where the military problem is totally different. Nor is it of any assistance to a solution to propose, as the Nehru Report does, the setting up of a Committee of Defence in a self-governing India, consisting of "the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defence, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs," together with the professional heads of the armed forces. The thing that matters is to consider what conditions must be fulfilled before Ministers responsible to the Indian Legislature can undertake the provision and direction of adequate armed forces in India. When that day comes, the organisation of a Committee of Indian Defence, with such Ministers at its head will not be difficult. At present the proposal to create one has no bearing upon the real problem at all."

(I.S.C.R., 99-100.)

In putting forward their own recommendations the Simon Commission based themselves on the principle that "the protection of the frontiers of India, at any rate for a long time to come, should not be regarded as a function of an Indian Government in relation to an Indian Legislature, but as a matter of supreme concern to the whole Empire which can only be effectively organised and controlled by an Imperial agency." They suggested that a definite agreement might be reached between India and Great Britain acting on behalf of the Empire, by which the forces composing the existing Army in India would no longer be under the control of the Government of India but would be under an Imperial authority which would naturally be the Viceroy acting in concert with the Commander-in-Chief. The Imperial authorities would undertake the obligations of Indian defence in return for the continued provision of definite facilities as to recruitment, areas, transport and other matters. It was suggested that there would be an equitable adjustment of the burden of finance, a contribution subject to revision at intervals being made from Indian revenues, while it was foreshadowed that the balance of the expenditure would be borne by Great Britain. "On its administrative side, the adoption of such a proposal would not involve any great departure from present methods. If the responsibility for the Army in India is to rest with the Imperial Government, that Government would continue to be represented in India by the Governor-General; and the day-by-day administration of the Army would be, as now, in the hands of the Commander-in-Chief. The latter would, however, cease to be a member of the Indian Legislature, and, while he remained a colleague of the Governor-General, he would cease to be the holder of a portfolio in the Government of India. The Central Legislature, as now, would not vote supply for the Army; appropriations of revenue for this purpose, in accordance with the arrangement we have assumed, would be authorised by certificate of the Governor-General." (I.S.C.R., II, 176.) It was suggested that a Committee on Army affairs should be constituted on which the Central Legislature would have representatives for the purpose of discussing and keeping in touch with military

question. The Commission felt that they had ample justification for such an attitude. "We have been led to put forward the above suggestions for a new method of constitutional treatment of the problem of Indian defence, because we have earnestly sought for some means by which the obstacle to progress which the control of the Army in India presents might be mitigated. To those who are tempted to say that the plan we have outlined is a derogation from the full range of Indian aspirations, we would reply that special arrangements, suited to the necessities of each case, have been found necessary in the history of the evolution of more than one part of the Empire towards self-government. If such a treatment of the subject were regarded as inadmissible we should regret it, because the obstacle would remain. At present, as we have shown in an earlier chapter, there are other reasons why more rapid advance at the Centre is impracticable and this may be regarded by some as a reason for postponing consideration of the questions we have been discussing in this Part of our Report. But it seems to us that it would be far better to face these difficulties and try to overcome them now. If British and Indian opinion will co-operate for the purpose, and, while grasping the realities of the position, will resolve to find a way to mitigate the obstacle to more rapid constitutional advance, this, we are convinced, would be a more desirable procedure than to delay until the urgency of the problem cannot be denied." (I.S.C.R., II, 178-9.)

(d) DESPATCH OF GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.—The proposals of the Simon Commission were examined at length by Government of India in their Despatch.

"The essence of their proposal, as we understand it, is a mutual agreement between Great Britain and India that for the time being the defence of India should be regarded as an Imperial concern carried on in co-operation with, but outside, the civil administration of the country. By a similar agreement, a fixed total sum would be made available from Indian revenues for defence expenditure, subject to revision at suitable intervals. The idea has undoubtedly many

attractive features. We have, however, to ask ourselves two questions, first whether, in the endeavour to avoid a constitutional difficulty of a special character, India may not fall into a greater danger by attempting to detach an important function of Government from its true place in the organised whole; and, second whether the control of defence can as a matter of fact be isolated in the manner proposed. It has to be remembered (and experience in all countries during the Great War has brought home this lesson very forcibly) that the administration of defence cannot be made the business of one department of Government alone. The successful conduct of war does not depend solely on the strength of the armed forces available, the manner in which they are raised and controlled, and their general state of preparedness, but upon the combined efforts of the Government and the country as a whole. A modern war may, and generally does, involve all the resources of the nation. In considering the wider aspects of the defence problem, the defence administration of the State cannot be dissociated from other branches of the administration, such as finance, maintenance of order and the quelling of civil disturbances, posts and telegraphs, railways, trade, shipping and transport, labour, health, and even education. The efficiency of the fighting services depends to a large extent on the general efficiency of the nation in these departments, and on the degree to which the national resources have been co-ordinated in peace, and can be harnessed in war. The responsibility of Government for defence is thus a joint responsibility. The Commission evidently had these facts in mind, for they have laid special emphasis on the necessity for continuing unimpaired the help and assistance which the army at present looks for and obtains from the civil administration. If we have correctly followed their line of thought, they believe that the co-operation of the civil departments in the day-to-day administration of defence can be secured on the same basis of mutual agreement as is necessary to the introduction of their scheme as a whole, though the means for ensuring such co-operation must in the final resort rest in the hands of the Governor-General. We have to examine this assumption from the practical point of view.

In the central Government as at present constituted, there is no fundamental difficulty in correlating the activities, and defining the responsibilities, of the various civil departments in regard to defence. Questions, which are the joint concern of the army and one or more civil departments, are dealt with under the ordinary inter-departmental routine of the Government of India and decided ultimately, in the event of disagreement, by a reference to Council. It is true that the procedure is sometimes found to be cumbrous, and that the need for a co-ordinating institution, analogous to the Committee of Imperial Defence, is not infrequently felt. This is at the most, however, a remediable defect in the administrative machinery. The Government, in its present unitary form, does provide the means of solving departmental differences, and precludes the possibility of deadlock.

We do not feel sure that this would still be the case under the arrangements proposed by the Statutory Commission. The Army Department would cease to be a constituent unit of the central Government. It could no longer rely on its position as a department of the Government of India for support when claiming the co-operation of other departments, or endeavouring to impress upon them its peculiar requirements or points of view. The burden of persuading a civil department in the last resort to take or withdraw any action in the interests of the army would rest upon the shoulders of the Governor-General, whose task would be made no easier by the fact that the central Government had been deprived of its direct share of responsibility for defence. It is not, in our opinion, merely a question of the provision of facilities in regard to recruitment, transport and other matters. The Army Department is in contact with civil departments from day-to-day. At present it deals with them on an equal footing; but if it became an authority separate from the central Government, some friction would almost certainly ensue. The position of an excluded Army Department would, we think, be difficult enough even if the central executive were constituted, as the Commission propose, with an official element, and were not responsible to the legislature. But if the exclusion of defence fulfilled its avowed object of removing the constitutional barrier to complete self-govern-

ment and the Army Department, administered by an Imperial agency, found itself in daily contact with a central Government responsible to the legislature in all respects, we apprehend that the possibilities of friction would be greatly increased.

*In the Legislature.*—The removal of the Commander-in-Chief and the Army Department from the Government of India might lead to complications in the legislature. The Commission observe that the Army Secretary would be available in the Legislative Assembly. He would however cease to be an official of the central Government, and, as that Government would be divested of its share in the responsibility for defence, he would act, not as its spokesman, but as the mouthpiece of an Imperial agency. His position in the Assembly as the official exponent of policies for which the Government of India were not responsible, would be in our view anomalous and embarrassing. There is already a tendency to criticise the existing arrangement under which the Army Department is represented in the Assembly by a Secretary, and not by a member of the Government. We think that there might be greater cause for dissatisfaction if the spokesman on military matters were not even an official of the Government of India. The Commission indeed propose that the Leader of the Federal Assembly should take charge of important debates on military subjects; but although the Leader of the Federal Assembly might personally carry great weight, his role, in army debates, would be merely that of an advocate briefed for the occasion.

*Effect upon the Indian soldier.*—The Commission have stated in their report the main argument on which their proposal is based. It is the principle that the protection of the frontiers of India, at any rate for a long time to come, should not be regarded as a function of an Indian Government in relation with an Indian legislature, but as a matter of supreme concern to the whole Empire, which can only be effectively organized and controlled by an Imperial agency....the greater part of the rank and file of the army in this country consists of British Indian subjects. The Commission's proposals might be thought to have the effect

of removing Indian officers and men from the service of the Government of India, and of turning them into employees of an Imperial agency, whose policy might be dictated to a large extent by the War Office. It is possible that the effect of this change in the status of the Indian soldier would not immediately be felt. Under the Commission's proposals, the army would still be directly subordinate to the Commander-in-Chief, and would still be under the supervision of the Governor-General. The dissociation of the army from the Government as a whole might, however, in time produce reactions unfavourable to the Indian soldier during his army career, and might also tend to deprive him of the protection and sympathy of the civil administration in his retirement.

*The portfolio of defence.*—If this view is accepted, the portfolio of defence would continue to be held by a member of the Central Government. This brings us to the question of the position of the Commander-in-Chief. We consider that there is great force in the Commission's recommendation that the Commander-in-Chief should cease to be a member of the Central Government, occupying a seat in the Indian Legislature. The present official position of the Commander-in-Chief, combining as it does the function of the supreme Commander of the forces in India with that of permanent Army Member and Government spokesman on army affairs, is becoming increasingly difficult and embarrassing.... We agree that the Commander-in-Chief should cease to be a member of the Indian legislature; and we recommend that his place in that respect should be taken by a civilian member for defence, who would become the responsible member of Government and Government spokesman in the legislature in all matters of defence policy. This, in our opinion, would constitute the simplest method of relieving the Commander-in-Chief of duties which are extraneous to the nature of his profession and appointment. The change would involve no dislocation of the existing machinery and the actual conduct of business between the Army Department and Army Headquarters would proceed on the existing lines. The Commander-in-Chief should, however, retain the right of direct access to the Governor-General, and should, as a matter of

rule, be present in Council when military affairs are discussed."

The Government of India therefore concluded that it would be preferable that Government of India should retain the control of the administration of the defence as at present and hoped that a workable partnership in its administration might gradually be evolved by means of the natural processes that would be set up by the new constitution.

(e) ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE (SECOND SESSION).—The constitutional aspect of the question was considered by the Federal Structure Committee of the Round Table Conference during their Second Session. They based themselves on the principle enunciated in the Defence Sub-Committee of the First Session that "The Defence of India must, to an increasing extent, be the concern of the Indian people." And then discussed the ways and means of implementing this principle.

"The view was strongly put forward by some members that no true responsibility for its own government will be conferred on India unless the subject of Defence (involving, of course, the control of the Army in India, including that of the British troops) is immediately placed in the hands of an Indian Ministry responsible to an Indian Legislature, with any safeguards that can be shown to be necessary.

The majority of the Committee are unable to share this view. They consider that it is impossible to vest in an Indian legislature during the period of transition the constitutional responsibility for controlling Defence, so long as the burden of actual responsibility cannot be simultaneously transferred.

The majority of the Committee therefore reaffirm the conclusion reached in the Committee at the last Session that the assumption by India of all the powers and responsibility which have hitherto rested on Parliament cannot be made at one step and that, during a period of transition, the Governor-General shall be responsible for Defence, being assisted by a Minister of his own choice responsible to him and not to the legislature.

At the same time there is no disagreement with the view that the Indian Legislature must be deeply concerned with

many aspects of Defence. It is undeniable that there can be no diminution of such opportunities as the present Legislature possesses of discussing and through discussion of influencing Defence administration. While the size, composition and cost of the Army are matters essentially for those on whom the responsibility rests and their expert advisers, yet they are not questions on which there can be no voicing of public opinion through constitutional channels. The Legislature would thus continue to be brought into the counsels of the Administration in the discussion of such outstanding problems as the carrying out of the policy of Indianisation. Further, there must be correlation of military and civil administration where the two spheres, as must sometimes inevitably be the case, are found to overlap. In the latter connection the suggestion was made that a body should be set up in India analogous to the Committee of Imperial Defence in Great Britain. Some members of the Committee considered that even though responsibility for the administration of the Army might remain, during a period of transition, with the Governor-General, the final voice on such questions as the size, composition and cost of the Army should rest with the Legislature.

To secure the measure of participation contemplated under paragraph 6 by the majority of the Committee, various suggestions were made, the cardinal feature of which, in almost all instances, was the precise position to be assigned to the 'Minister' appointed by the Governor-General to take charge of the Defence portfolio. It was assumed that his functions would roughly correspond to those of the Secretary of State for War in the United Kingdom. Among the more important proposals made were the following:—

- (i) The 'Minister,' while primarily responsible to the Governor-General, should as regards certain aspects only of Defence, be responsible to the Legislature.
- (ii) The 'Minister' though responsible to the Governor-General, should be an Indian; and he might be chosen from among the Members of the Legislature.
- (iii) The 'Minister,' of the character contemplated in (ii) should be considered to be a Member of the 'responsible'

Ministry, participating in all their discussions, enjoying joint responsibility with them, and in the event of a defeat in Legislature over a question not relating to the Army should resign with them though of course, remaining eligible for immediate re-appointment by the Governor-General.

While some of these suggestions contain the germs of possible lines of development, it is impossible to escape from the conclusion (a) that, so long as the Governor-General is responsible for Defence, the constitution must provide that the Defence 'Minister' should be appointed at the unfettered discretion of the Governor-General and should be responsible to him alone, and (b) that this 'Minister's' relations with the rest of the Ministry and with the Legislature must be left to the evolution of political usage within the framework of the constitution.

The view was put forward that, while supply for the defence services should not be subject to the annual vote of the Legislature, agreement should be sought at the outset on a basic figure for such expenditure for a period of, say, five years, subject to joint review by the Legislature and representatives of the Crown at the end of such period, with special powers in the Governor-General to incur expenditure in cases of emergencies. The details of any such plan should receive further careful examination." [R.T.C. (Second Session), 41-3.]

### Conclusion.

It will be clear from the above analysis that the defence problems are some of the most complex, difficult and crucial problems in the way of realisation of responsible government in British India. The problems cannot be solved by specious generalities as was the way of the Nehru Committee. They cannot be relegated into the background for time to solve them, as is the way of the unpractical doctrinaires who are clamouring for independence for India.

It is incumbent on all on whom lies the shaping of the destiny of India to grasp the realities of the position, and calmly and patiently to try and overcome the difficulties. For the essential of all good government is public peace and tranquillity and the ultimate sanction of public peace and tranquillity is an efficient and disciplined army.

